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SUBJECT: NEW NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT PASSES WITH A NARROW MAJORITY

Sensitive But Unclassified. Please Protect Accordingly.

¶11. (SBU) Summary: Moldova's new National Security Concept (NSC) passed in Parliament on May 22. The document provides for neutrality as the cornerstone of Moldova's national security. Unlike the previous 1995 version, the new document focuses more on social and economic threats to national security, European integration efforts and the need to enhance democracy and human rights. The bill was supported by the Communists and Social Democrats but criticized by the opposition for its focus on neutrality and for ruling out future NATO membership. With Russian insistence upon Moldova's permanent neutrality as a pre-condition for a Transnistria settlement, adoption of this document could help facilitate progress in the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict.
End Summary.

NSC Draft Years in Process, Now Updated

¶12. (SBU) In December 2005, President Voronin created a governmental commission to begin drafting the NSC. The draft was submitted to the Parliament in the summer of 2007. However, the government recalled its draft from the Parliament a week before the scheduled parliamentary hearings, and a new document which incorporated President Voronin's demilitarization proposals was submitted instead. The current National Security Concept has three chapters: threats to national security, international security cooperation (bilateral and multilateral), and Moldovan national security and security-sector reform.

¶13. (U) The concept lists the threats to national security as: the Transnistrian conflict, international terrorism, inter-ethnic tensions, organized crime, natural disasters, and social, economic and information-technology threats. The draft mentions the EU, Russia, the U.S., Romania and Ukraine (in that order) as Moldova's key partners in the field of security. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with international organizations (including the CIS and NATO) are allowed, but only within the limits of Moldova's neutral status. The armed forces can be used only to defend the country and in peace-keeping operations. According to the document, a detailed National Security Strategy will be developed on the basis of the NSC.

Neutrality: The Key Issue

¶13. (SBU) The draft NSC was criticized by some liberal opposition leaders, who complained about the Communists' stance on neutrality, suggesting that according to the Constitution, the people of Moldova should decide whether or not to join NATO. All parliamentary groups, however, shared the view that any NSC must enjoy the support of all parties. The Social Democrats had insisted on paying more attention to social threats to national security such as poverty and migration, but supported the bill anyway. Though the Christian Democrats and the Democratic Party had conditionally supported the

draft in its first reading, these two factions were discontent that their amendments had been rejected and opposed the bill in the second reading. Deputies from Our Moldova Alliance even walked out of the plenary to protest the fact that their amendments were not included. The bill passed with 58 votes (out of a parliamentary total of 101).

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Passage of a National Security Concept was an objective of Moldova's Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO.

It is the baseline document needed for developing Moldova's National Security Strategy. This National Security Concept is oriented less towards NATO than the previous document, and seems designed to keep Russia happy with its statements about neutrality. The NSC limits Moldova's cooperation with NATO to activities within the scope of the Partnership for Peace program, and declares openly that Moldova has no desire to join NATO. The substantive core of the document is its notion of permanent neutrality, while the rest of its provisions are quite general. If Russia feels the NSC assuages its concerns about Moldovan neutrality, it may be more inclined to push the Transnistrans to resolve the conflict.

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